

FACTSHEET

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS AND ELECTORS

2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

In general, the president and vice president of the United States are elected in a two-step process. The first step is carried out by the electorate of the nation; and the second by a group of people called the "Presidential Electors." This system of electing the president and vice president is called the Electoral College System. The System is designed to ensure the indirect election of the president.

Early in a presidential election year (once every four years), political parties or groups (in each state and the District of Columbia) meet and select "electors" according to their respective party/group rules. Each State is permitted a number of "electors" equal to its representation in Congress. The District of Columbia has three representatives to Congress and is permitted three "electors." By this formula, the State of Hawaii is allotted four "electors."

In the State of Hawaii, the names of the presidential and vice presidential candidates are listed (as a team) on the general election ballot instead of the "electors." Registered voters in the State of Hawaii vote for the presidential and vice presidential team of their choice, but are really selecting the "electors" (represented by the presidential and vice presidential team listed on the ballot) who will actually elect the president and vice president of the United States.

In 48 States (Hawaii included) and the District of Columbia, the "electors" are elected by a plurality of the popular vote for the presidential and vice presidential candidates, i.e., the ticket garnering the most votes. In Maine and Nebraska, two electors are chosen by a statewide popular vote and the remainder by the popular vote within each Congressional district.

The chosen electors of each state will meet on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December at 2:00 p.m. to cast their votes for president and vice president. In Hawaii, the next meeting of the electors will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Monday **December 15, 2008** at the State Capitol.

A president is elected if he or she receives an absolute majority of the electoral votes cast. If no majority is received, the House of Representatives choose the winner from the top three candidates. Each State delegation has one vote for this purpose. Two elections have been decided in this manner.

The vice president is also selected in the same manner, but in a separate vote. If no candidate receives the majority vote, the United States Senate selects the winner from the top two candidates. Each senator has one vote in this process. The Senate has not voted in this manner since 1836.

The Twelfth Amendment (1804) required the electors to cast two separate ballots, one for the president and a second for the vice president. The Amendment is the only change made to the Electoral College System.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS - 2008 GENERAL ELECTION

In the State of Hawaii, the names of the candidates for president and vice president are used on the ballot in place of the names of the presidential electors. The votes cast for president and vice president of each political party, or group that has qualified by petition to place the names of their candidates on the ballot, shall be counted for the presidential electors and alternates nominated by their respective political party/group. Hawaii is entitled to four presidential electors in the 2008 election. (U.S. Constitution, Article II, Section 1 and HRS Sections 11-113 and 14-23)

SUBMISSION OF NAMES OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS AND ALTERNATES (HRS Chapter 14)

The party/group that is eligible to place the names of candidates for president and vice president on the General Election ballot shall hold a state party or group convention to nominate as candidates:

- four presidential electors
- four first alternates for each presidential elector
- four second alternates for each presidential elector

State law requires that the electors shall be registered voters of the State. (HRS Section 14-21)

The names and addresses of the nominees for presidential electors and alternates shall be certified by the chairman and secretary of the convention and submitted to the chief election officer not later than 4:30 p.m. on the 60th day prior to the general election. In the year 2008, the deadline will be **Friday, September 5, 2008**. (HRS Section 14-21)

ELECTION OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS (HRS Chapter 14)

The electors and alternates of the party/group that receives the most votes for president and vice president in the General Election shall be elected and shall attend the Electoral College to cast votes for president and vice president. All four of the electors shall be of the same party/group.

In accordance with State law, the chief election officer shall certify to the governor the names of the elected presidential electors and alternates not later than 4:30 p.m. on the last day in the month of the election. (HRS Section 14-24)

CONVENING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS

The presidential electors shall assemble at the State Capitol on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December next following their election, at two o'clock in the afternoon. In the year 2008, the electors shall assemble on **December 15, 2008** at the State Capitol. (HRS Section 14-26)

The electors, when convened, shall vote by ballot for that person for president and that person for vice president of the United States, who are, respectively, the candidates of the party or group which they represent. (HRS Section 14-28)

2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS FOR STATE OF HAWAII

A list of the presidential electors and alternates will be available after the September 5, 2008 submission deadline.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Primary Election will be held on Saturday, September 20, 2008.

The General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 4, 2008.

This Fact Sheet is intended for informational purposes only and should not be used as an authority on the Hawaii election law and candidate deadlines. Requirements and/or deadlines may change pending changes in legislation. Consult the Hawaii Revised Statutes and other sources for more detailed and accurate requirements.

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